

WILLIAM EDMONDSON



William Edmondson (1874-1951), the son of freed slaves, was born in rural Davidson County and moved to Nashville by 1890. Working first at the railroad and then as a janitor at the Nashville Woman's Hospital, he lived at 1434 Fourteenth Avenue South surrounded by family and a vibrant community. At the age of 57, Edmondson began working with limestone using a hammer and a railroad spike. He explained, "I was out in the driveway with some old pieces of stone when I heard a voice telling me to pick up my tools and start to work on a tombstone. I looked up in the sky and right there in the noon day light He hung a tombstone out for me to make."

Influenced from the world around him, Edmondson carved for 17 years creating critters like rabbits and bears, biblical figures as well as neighbors and friends. In 1937, he was the first African-American to receive a solo exhibition at New York's Museum of Modern Art. He stands among the most important self-taught artists of the past century. (Source: Cheekwood Museum of Art)



PARTNERS

This project would not have been possible without the spectacular collaboration and partnership of the following individuals and organizations:

Metropolitan Development and Housing Agency
Ayers Institute for Teacher Learning & Innovation at Lipscomb University
Oasis Center
Hawkins Partners, Inc.
Nashville Civic Design Center
National Endowment for the Arts
Cheekwood Botanical Gardens and Museum of Art
Tennessee State Museum
Council Member Erica Gilmore
Council Member-at-Large Ronnie Steine
Anne Brown

Metro Arts Public Art

This project is part of a larger initiative designed to build Nashville's public art collection and to enrich the lives of all Nashvillians. In 2000, a Metro ordinance was passed that earmarks one percent of the net proceeds from general obligation bonds issued for new or major renovation construction of Metro facilities to be set aside for the creation of new public art projects.

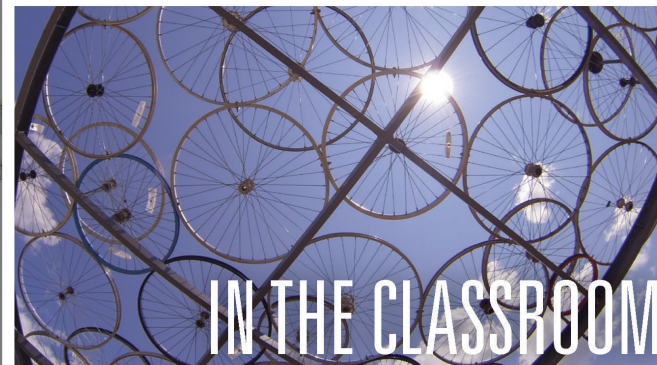
The Metropolitan Nashville Arts Commission is the city's designated leader in arts and cultural programming and policy.

Metro Nashville Arts Commission

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Hunter specializes in large scale public commissions and community built projects. Her award winning work is included in numerous private and public collections across the country. Hunter continues to teach workshops at her studio in Bell Buckle, Tenn. and around the country on concrete, mosaics, sculpture, and professional practices for artists. Created in 2001, The Gathering was completed in collaboration with students and staff from the Oasis Center and community volunteers. In 2013 the Oasis Center donated the sculpture to the Metro Nashville Arts Commission and it was relocated to Edmondson Park in 2014.



DID YOU KNOW? Metro Arts partnered with the Ayers Institute for Teacher Learning & Innovation at Lipscomb University to work with 10 local middle and high school teachers to create *Revitalized! Common Core Instructional Strategies as Experienced through Lessons in Nashville's Edmondson Park*. The unit plans are available on the Ayers Institute web site (www.lipscomb.edu/ayers/metroarts) as well as at publicart.nashville.gov. The unit plans cover math, science, history, visual arts and ELA.

EDMONDSON PARK PUBLIC ART



CHARLOTTE AVE
BETWEEN 16TH & 17TH AVE N

PROJECT OVERVIEW

In honor of Nashville native William Edmondson, a self-taught artist and the first African-American to have a solo exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art, Metro Arts commissioned two internationally-known self-taught artists, Thornton Dial and Lonnie Holley, to create site-specific public artworks for Edmondson Park.

The Metropolitan Development and Housing Agency (MDHA) led the revitalization of the park. The park design incorporates ideas developed during the *Design Your Neighborhood* project initiated by the Nashville Civic Design Center, which invited youth from the community to reimagine the park space.



"When I first stood on the land that is Edmondson Park, I could see the state capital building off in the distance. I thought about the work that went into erecting that building. From the stone in the quarry and the quarrymen, to the architects and the masons who built it and all the workers along the way, it took great effort."

SUPPORTED BY THE ANCESTORS
BY LONNIE HOLLEY

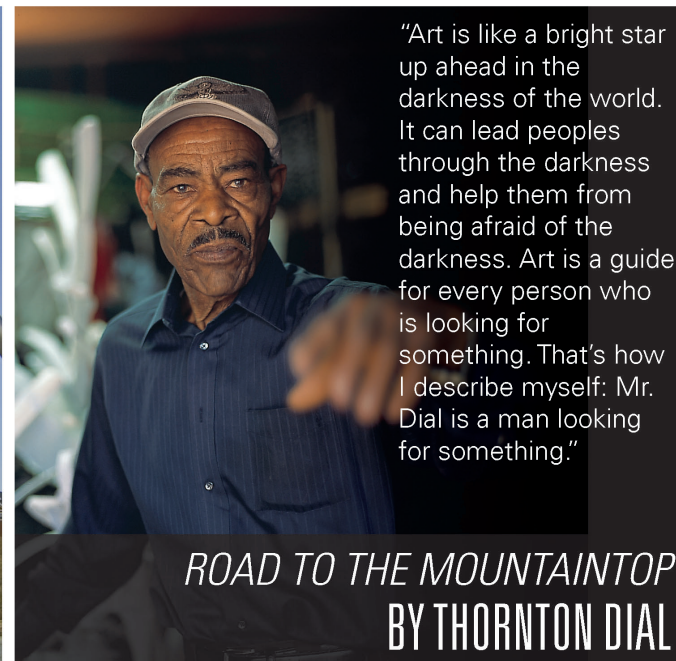


Lonnie Holley is a self-taught artist and musician born in 1950 in Birmingham, Alabama. Holley was inspired to pursue art after carving tombstones for his sister's two children who were tragically killed in a house fire. Like Edmondson, Holley believes that his work and materials are divinely inspired.

Working primarily in carved sandstone and found object assemblages, Holley's sculptures have been displayed in institutions such as the Smithsonian American Art Museum, the American Folk Art Museum, the High Museum of Art, and the White House.

"Art is like a bright star up ahead in the darkness of the world. It can lead peoples through the darkness and help them from being afraid of the darkness. Art is a guide for every person who is looking for something. That's how I describe myself: Mr. Dial is a man looking for something."

ROAD TO THE MOUNTAINTOP
BY THORNTON DIAL



Thornton Dial was born in 1928 in Emelle, Alabama. For thirty years Dial worked at the Pullman-Standard plant building box cars. Dial was discovered as an artist in 1987 by friend Lonnie Holley and art collector William Arnett, although he recalls creating, "things" out of salvaged materials since early childhood. He is



one of the most notable self-taught artists of the last century, exhibiting work in major museums across the United States. Highly collected, Dial's work is featured in numerous public and private collections such as the Smithsonian American Art Museum and the Whitney Museum of American Art.